

JUN 1

THE Commonweal

Russell Kirk

THE MOOD OF CONSERVATISM

more passion, more intelligence

Thomas R. Brooks

END TO FEATHERBEDDING?

plight of the workers

*Mr. Lilienthal's Worries • A Poem on
John the Baptist • Richard Gilman on
"The Brig" • Convulsions in the Body
Politic • Father Delp's Meditations*

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THE COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

More Trouble for the U. N.

ONCE AGAIN, the United Nations is suffering a financial crisis. This time the General Assembly is meeting in an extraordinary session to try to garner funds amounting to some forty-three million dollars to support the Congo and Middle East peace-keeping operations until next January. The crisis has been caused chiefly by the Soviet's refusal to pay the forty-six million dollars which it owes for these operations. The Russians claim that these were voted part of the regular budget without their approval. Representative Nikolai T. Fedorenko also added to this latest protest a list of other things the Soviet Union would not support as being "unlawfully" voted into the regular budget.

The Soviet Union has for some time now sought the disruption of the United Nations as a force for mediation in world affairs. It did all it could to prevent the Korean engagement in 1950, and was only restrained by virtue of having absented itself from the Security Council at the time. Now, having apparently given up the attempt to impose a ruinous "troika" system on the United Nations, it is, in the words of Ambassador Stevenson, trying to exert a "financial veto." If no other sources for funds could be found at present, a potentially disastrous withdrawal of the U.N. peace-keeping forces in the Congo and Gaza areas would be necessary.

Fortunately or unfortunately, it is not only the Russians who are remiss in their financial obligations to the United Nations. France too has outstanding debts on the Congo and Middle East operations, as do some sixty-seven other countries. Many of these latter simply cannot pay, and must be "overlooked." France can and should pay, but speaking realistically, it is very unlikely that she can be persuaded to do so, since she also refused to accept the operations as part of the regular budget. There is a better chance of getting the delinquent Latin American countries to make their contribu-

tion, and Mr. Stevenson is very wise in addressing his pleas to them.

What, then, is the United States to do, besides seeking to persuade member-nations to make their just contributions? We have already paid more than half of the cost of the Congo and Gaza operations and can hardly be expected in justice to give any more. Moreover, the Administration has indicated again and again that this country cannot be expected continually to pull the United Nations out of the financial hole left by the Russians' refusal to pay their share. At the same time, the money that would be involved in saving the U.N. in this present crisis is small compared to the United States' and other Western budgets as a whole. Because the effectiveness of the U.N. is at stake, then, there would seem to be no course but for the United States, and the other Western powers (necessarily excluding France) to be prepared to accept an extra burden again.

SOLVING the immediate financial problem, however, only puts off until tomorrow a confrontation with the deeper issues raised by the latest Soviet refusals. These issues include chiefly the continued existence of the U.N. as a politically effective force for world peace or its degeneration into a global "debating society." What, in effect, the Russians have asserted in the present case is a "right" to pick and choose which items on the budget they will support, thus exercising a ruinous financial veto on the program. Their aim is clearly to restrict the power of the Secretary-General and the General Assembly to police world trouble spots and to restore primacy in peace-keeping operations to the Security Council, where they have the veto.

In the present instance, the World Court judged that payment for the peace-keeping operations could be brought under the regular budget and that defaulters were liable to Charter sanctions. Under the provisions of Article 19 of the U.N. Charter, the

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Russians (and the French) could lose their vote for not paying their share of the Congo operation. It is, of course, unlikely that any of the big powers would be denied their vote, since that would no less mean the collapse of an effective U.N. than a general power of veto. Perhaps in the present case, if the Soviet Union persists in its refusal, it could at least be refused a vote on matters relating to the Congo and the Middle East in the future. In all justice it seems that some such "compromise sanctions" must be applied.

Aside from such specific sanctions, which are not without their risks, it can be hoped that the non-aligned nations, who make a majority in the U.N., will see the threat which Soviet intransigence represents and put pressure on the Russians to live up to their obligations. Setting aside financial contributions, the Afro-Asian members thus offer the best hope for contravening Soviet designs against the structure of the U.N. The principal objective must be to save the financial crisis from turning into a crisis of confidence, for the U.N. still represents the world's best lobby for world peace.

Servant of the Servants

IN ONE WAY, any illness suffered by a Pope is bound to be "news." Thus it is that the newspapers have been filled in recent days with stories about the condition of Pope John XXIII. This is hardly surprising; by anyone's standards, a Catholic pope is an important world figure.

Yet even allowing for the normal interest in the health of a pope, it is hard not to detect a measure of concern far out of the ordinary. How could anyone manage to treat Pope John as just another pope? Ever since his election, he has caused one surprise after another. To the shock of everyone, Catholic and non-Catholic, he called a Council and vigorously set about making certain that it would take place. In the Council itself, he saw to it that everything possible would be done to insure its success. And the success he envisioned was not that of bigger and better condemnations, but rather a renewed and reanimated Church.

Nor has that been all. In his two most important encyclicals, *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris*, he managed to challenge the wisdom of the world in such a way that even those most indifferent to religion could hardly avoid being stirred and impressed. Yet possibly the greatest significance of those two encyclicals was that they made even many Catholics sit up and take notice; for some, indeed, the Pope was almost too bold. There is nothing so disturbing for many Catholics as a Pope who

dares confront the crises of the age with Christian hope, who refuses to be the captive of "tough-minded" realism.

There are many ways of praising Pope John. But perhaps the most deserved and accurate form of praise is simply to say that he has been everything a pope should be: "a servant of the servants." No one has been able to take him for granted; few there are who cannot feel pain at his illness.

Civil Rights Decisions

"SWEEPING decisions"—the phrase is Roy Wilkins'—is not too strong a term for the batch of civil rights rulings handed down by the Supreme Court last week.

Ruling on six cases, the Court held that sit-ins at lunch counters and the use of public facilities by Negroes are legal in communities where segregation is a city policy. The reasoning was that while the discrimination involved may be private, the umbrella of sanction thrown up by a segregation ordinance—or equivalent official support—brings the incident under the heading of segregation under law. In other words, when the city legislates segregation, or supports it in some official way, Negroes are free to seek service in privately owned stores.

Significantly, the Court ignored the popular distinction between public and private activity. In one case statements by city officials endorsing lunch counter segregation were considered sufficient official involvement to move the question into the public arena. At first glance this interpretation may seem tortured. After all, the storekeeper insisted that the segregation was his own idea, and there is little reason to doubt his bigoted convictions. But the Court is giving warning here that it recognizes the many faces official discrimination can assume, and that the textbook distinctions between public and private discrimination are increasingly inadequate to deal with the realities of the question.

At each end of the spectrum matters seem clear. Personal relationships and membership in closed clubs are obviously "private." Access to community parks or government jobs is "public." But the vast area in between is mostly virgin territory and the complexities of venturing into it are many. When the Court ruled against restrictive covenants—agreements not to sell real estate to certain races—its reasoning was that the appeal to state power to enforce these covenants brought them into the public sector. The decision may have many consequences. Anthony Lewis wrote in the *New York Times*: "For if mere police enforcement of a person's private choice were enough to produce 'state

action,' then there would be no effective right of a private person to choose his associates. A man could not call the police to eject a Negro trespasser from his home." Whether or not his interpretation is correct, Mr. Lewis did point out that the Court never extended its restrictive-covenant theory, and shied away from applying it last week. It could have argued that mere police enforcement of lunch counter discrimination brought the matter into the public sector. Instead it took the higher ground of seeking out overt official encouragement for segregation.

The Court is not sidestepping on the question of what is public and what isn't, but it is certainly stepping carefully. In forbidding lunch counter segregation where local law makes it legal, it purposely avoided the question of whether that segregation is allowable when the law is repealed, as it is now almost certain to be in cities throughout the South.

This question will be taken up next term. If the case is decided on its substance, much of the ambiguity between public and private will be eliminated. The opinion here is that commercial enterprises have a greater public aspect than is generally admitted, and that a store "open to the public" has a responsibility to deal with patrons evenhandedly regardless of race and regardless of the store's private ownership. The cry would be, of course, that the Court is trying to infringe private property rights. More than that is involved here, however. The Court has progressed to the point where it must draw a line through the uncharted area of quasi-public activity. The line suggested here is a supportable one, and parallels the existing legal distinction between *licensee* and *invitee*. It would also express legally what most of us feel to be so obvious: that the rules for choosing friends or members of a private club are not the same as those for conducting a public enterprise.

Controls Rejected

THE JOLT delivered by the nation's voting wheat farmers has created much uncertainty. There was logic on the Administration's side. The combination of price supports and acreage controls has not worked because yield per acre has increased so sharply. Hence the attempted shift to controls of actual production.

Opposition was spearheaded by the Farm Bureau Federation, spokesman for the big commercial farm operators especially in the region of the Great Lakes. Hundreds of thousands of farmers with less than fifteen acres in wheat, polled on a support plan for the first time, supplied the bulk of the negative

votes. A large proportion of these are not actually owners of small family farms, the continuance of which is of such value for the social health of our nation. They are simply not dependent on their wheat crop, which they grow as a sideline for feed or moderate seasonal cash purposes. Many are adherents of the businesslike Farm Bureau.

The large wheat growers, exploiting vast tracts to the utmost with chemical fertilizers and mechanized equipment, apparently believe they can make a solid profit even at lower price levels. The smaller wheat producers cited above can readily shift from wheat to soy beans. Both oppose the additional controls involved in the rejected bushel quotas.

Farm Bureau adherents also doubt that in an election year the Democrats would countenance depressed farm prices. They expect new legislation combining price supports with only modest acreage controls. Winter wheat producers in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma would be the hardest hit by lower prices—hardly a strategic nucleus for Democratic votes. But "dollar wheat" might supply potent electoral weapons in the many states where Congressional districting favors rural interests.

It will be worth seeing now to what extent production increases, surpluses mount and prices dip, with remaining supports down to fifty per cent parity and only for those who observe required acreage limitations. Any equitable new program would distinguish between the undercapitalized small producers, who need the benefit of price supports, and the big commercial operators, who do not. This could be done by setting a reasonable maximum for government support payments to a single owner or farming corporation. As an advocate of untrammelled free enterprise the latter is hardly in a position to object.

Equal Pay for Women

AS THE HISTORY of mankind easily demonstrates, the ways of discriminating against minority groups are almost unlimited. In our day, however, some of the cruder forms of discrimination are no longer fashionable: we frown on lynchings, denial of the franchise, separate facilities, and so forth. There is little need for such crude devices, anyway. Better to deny people equal job rights, equal pay and equal treatment: those tactics achieve the same ends in the long run. The downtrodden can be kept in their ordained place with little fuss or bother.

In our country, discrimination against women has taken all the usual forms—save extermination, which has never seemed feasible. For a time, women were denied jobs of any significance, the vote, and equal

rights. But, one by one, the crasser forms of discrimination disappeared. In theory, at least, women today have the same rights as men. In practice, unfortunately, the matter is hardly so simple. A case in point is the fact of widespread wage discrimination against women. So far as we know, there are no laws which decree that women should be paid less than men for doing the same work; it would be a rash man who would propose such a law. Yet, in the widespread absence of state or federal laws enjoining equal pay, women normally receive less money than men for doing the same work. Discrimination is thus quietly and effectively implemented.

Fortunately, the fact of wage discrimination based on sex has not gone unnoticed. A recent Administration bill calling for equal pay for equal work regardless of sex has now been passed by the Senate; a similar bill in the House is expected to be acted upon shortly. Since the legislation in question will be a federal statute, applicable only to interstate commerce, it will of necessity touch only a portion of all those employers making use of female

labor. Nevertheless, it will represent one important advance.

Yet if any real progress for the majority of female workers is to be achieved—and there are now an estimated twenty-five million women in the American work force—it is the states which must enact effective legislation. At present, there are only sixteen states which have minimum wage rate laws which apply equally to men and women. The remainder of the states either have special minimum rates for women or have not legislated on the matter at all. Some seventeen states have no laws to protect women from wage exploitation.

There is, it seems evident to us, no good reason why such widespread inequity should continue to be tolerated. Quite apart from some of the pragmatic reasons for equity urged in the Senate legislation—for instance, maximum utilization of available labor resources—the issue of one of basic human rights. Women have the same right to a living wage as men, and the same right to be protected by the law. Women are human beings also.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Progress on the Home Front

PRESIDENT KENNEDY's modest legislative program is making suitably modest but discernible progress in Congress.

There are three major bills on the Administration's agenda. They are tax reduction, medical care for the aged, and federal aid to elementary and high schools. Each of them is the subject of the Administration's one-big-bill-a-year technique. Last year was the year for the foreign trade bill. This is the year for tax reduction. Next year will be the time for the medical care bill. The prospects for the tax bill are favorable, those for the medical care bill are a shade less than fifty-fifty, and those for the general education bill so poor as to be non-existent. In retrospect, it seems probable that 1961 was the year for the education bill but the Administration may have outmaneuvered itself by being too clever. The Senate passed the education bill that year without difficulty, and the House seemed disposed to agree. But Abraham Ribicoff, then Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, and Presidential aides delayed House consideration for a crucial few weeks while they attempted to devise some compromise language that would at least partially satisfy Catholic parochial school supporters. As soon as rumors of these attempts circulated, the Southern Baptists and other Protestant groups that take a "hard" position on church-state issues became aroused. The marginal Southern votes for the bill began to fade away. The moment for victory had passed. In fairness, however,

one has to stress that Administration responsibility for the defeat of its own bill is not clear-cut. The division in the House in 1961 was so close that the general education bill might have failed in any event.

There will be no federal assistance for public or parochial elementary and high schools until some compromise is worked out behind the scenes among the rival interests. This would necessarily involve some delicate, confidential mediation efforts by the President and other high officials. There are no signs that such an effort is under way. Theodore Sorenson, the President's senior staff assistant on domestic affairs, recently remarked that the basis exists for a possible compromise of church-and-state issues in the school aid controversy but he is not certain that the first Catholic President is the right man to propose the compromise. This cryptic comment suggests that Mr. Kennedy may now regret the strict constitutionalist position against any aid to parochial schools that he felt obliged to take as a candidate and upon first entering office. He prides himself upon his realism and his flexibility, but when, if ever, he will feel confident of his ability to unsnarl the tangled education controversy, no one can now predict.

In recent weeks, Mr. Kennedy has yielded to sentiment in the House in favor of several bills on less controversial forms of educational aid rather than the omnibus measure he originally recommended. The House has already passed and the Senate is likely to act

favorably on a bill authorizing \$677 million in grants to construct buildings at medical and dental schools and to provide loans to students at these institutions. The House Education and Labor Committee has reported a second bill to provide more than a billion dollars over a three-year period in grants for buildings at colleges and universities, both public and private. This same proposal would have become law a year ago if the National Education Association had not raised the church-and-state issue against it. This issue has not traditionally been raised against federal assistance to colleges because most legislators have taken the sensible view that since college students are adults, fears of federally-financed religious indoctrination are irrelevant. The fact that so many of our leading universities have now or have had in the past the financial support of a religious denomination has been important in shaping a calm attitude on this question. Assuming nothing occurs in the next few months to exaggerate the religious aspect, one can reasonably expect that Congress will finally approve the college bill.

MOST observers believe that President Kennedy made a strategic error in making the tax bill his chief legislative objective this year. The consensus is that tax reduction has so much appeal to the private selfishness of almost all of us that Congress would have approved it in any event. Instead, the President chose to give it the full treatment. Tax reduction has been the subject of several Presidential speeches. No cabinet member makes a talk before any audience without working in at least a passing reference to it. With considerable difficulty, the White House and the Treasury finally rounded up a group of businessmen willing to serve on a citizens committee to do some dignified lobbying. The attainment of other legislative objectives is being sacrificed this year in order to hold together Congressional support for a tax cut. The feeling is widespread that all this effort is unnecessary. Indeed, by focusing so much attention on the proposal, the Administration may inadvertently have aroused some sleeping opposition from the part of the public that still thinks that government finance is managed on the same principles as an individual's private budget.

These political and publicity efforts would have been justified if the Administration were making a concerted push to reform taxes instead of merely reducing them. But the reform portion of the tax program is only a sop to liberal sentiment and to the wishes of Rep. Wilbur Mills, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. The Senate Finance Committee is sure to defeat most of the reforms, regardless of what the House does. Mr. Kennedy knows this well and in his public pronouncements, he has several times stopped just short of abandoning his reform recommendations altogether.

His principal objective is a reduction in tax rates to give the economy a sustained and substantial upward thrust. As matters now stand, the House is expected to pass the tax bill in early July and the Senate in early September.

In addition to the "big three"—the tax, medical care, and education bills—the President is actively backing about ten other measures which are somewhat less important and less controversial. The outlook is that Congress will approve a majority of them this year. The Senate has already passed an excellent Wilderness Bill that would place 6,800,000 acres of our national forest permanently outside the reach of private lumbering and mining interests. Last year, the House Interior Committee killed the same bill because of the opposition of Chairman Aspinall, a Colorado Democrat, and other senior members who are responsive to economic interests in the Rocky Mountain states. It is too early to tell whether the Administration can rescue the bill this year. The prospects are more certain for two bills which would provide federal matching funds to states to build and operate community centers for the treatment of mental illness and of mentally retarded persons. Both these bills are close to the President's heart and have attracted considerable support. Congress is also expected to approve the two youth bills. One would establish a Youth Conservation Corps, modeled on the CCC of the 1930's, in which boys from 16 to 21 could work in forests and recreation areas. The other would establish a National Service Corps, modeled on the Peace Corps, in which young people could volunteer their services in this country to help in mental hospitals, in day care centers for the children of migrant workers, on Indian reservations, and in other useful projects.

The Senate has already passed and the House will soon act upon a pioneering program to provide federal assistance to state and local governments to modernize their subways and other mass transit facilities. Congress also seems likely to approve a bill to provide free legal counsel to any defendants in federal criminal cases who are too poor to hire their own attorneys. This simple act of justice is so patently desirable that one is faintly shocked that such a bill was not passed long ago.

In summary, the two houses of Congress, despite their partially antiquated procedures and the many obstructions created by their seniority and committee systems, are slowly enacting a fairly sizable budget of domestic legislation. By autumn, Mr. Kennedy will probably be able to point to some tangible legislative gains. But still the questions persist: Are these measures sufficient to meet the complex and intensifying problems our society faces in the sixties? Would a more aggressive leadership of Congress and of public opinion produce more impressive results? **WILLIAM V. SHANNON**

(William V. Shannon is The Commonwealth's regular correspondent in Washington.)

Mr. Lilienthal's Worries

EVERY ONCE in a while it seems as if everyone is talking about one particular speech or article. More often than not, this is not because the item in question is particularly new or original; rather it is because the piece manages to strike a particular note people most want to hear at the moment. I suspect that David Lilienthal's recent speech in commemoration of TVA's thirtieth anniversary was a good example.

All Americans should take another look at the accomplishments of the TVA, its former chairman said, and then remember that our influence abroad depends on getting things done at home. "It is not only charity that begins at home," he said. "Strength also begins at home, and humaneness as well. All about us is evidence that with America's increasing preoccupation for the well-being of other parts of the globe, with our deep concern about our position, our prestige, our responsibilities abroad, we have, in characteristic American fashion, moved from the unworkable extreme of isolation to an equal, but even more dangerous extreme. We are in danger of putting our best efforts into being a kind of universal mother's helper for the troubles of the world. . . ."

Mr. Lilienthal does not object to the help we give other countries. He is worried lest "in our exuberance at finding ourselves a world leader, we are beginning to neglect the needs of our own country." In fact, considerably less than one per cent of our gross national product is devoted to foreign aid. However, Mr. Lilienthal is not suggesting that we are spending too much money on foreign aid, but rather that "we are overspending our emotional energy on binges about Russia, India, Cuba, the moon—everything except what happens here where we live."

Emotional resources, Mr. Lilienthal says—and this is the heart of his case—are limited. If we expend them lavishly on everything in the world outside our own borders, we will be unable to cope with our domestic problems, from race relations to medical care, from unemployment to the proper development of our national resources. And in the long run, Mr. Lilienthal says, "The hopes of the world for the protection and continuation of human culture, in short, of a civilized world, will not be determined by what happens in India, or China, or Russia, or Africa, nor indeed in Western Europe. It will be determined by what happens in our own country. . . ."

Mr. Lilienthal's speech was bound to have an immediate appeal. It may be easier for the President to employ his power in foreign affairs than it is to deal with a balky Congress, but there is a limit to what U.S. power can accomplish abroad, whether in Katanga, Laos or

Cuba. Once we run into a few such frustrating examples, as we have lately, the temptation to retreat to our own borders again is very strong.

Nonetheless, it would be wrong to suggest that Mr. Lilienthal's appeal will be only to isolationists. As the respected James Reston of the *Times* put it in commenting on the Lilienthal speech, events such as those in Alabama confront the Administration with old questions: "what profit if it gain the whole world and lose its own soul? And how can it presume to bring law, order and education to the world if it cannot do so at home?"

Mr. Lilienthal's thesis, then, appeals to more than the isolationists, and it should not be thought strange that this is so. The American idea remains our greatest foreign policy asset, even if we don't always seem to know how to use it, and our great defects at home, from Birmingham, Alabama, to the unemployment rate, raise serious questions about our ability to make that American idea work as it should. In this respect Mr. Lilienthal's speech struck a responsive chord among so many because we know, deep down in our hearts, that this is so.

Yet I do not think this makes Mr. Lilienthal right. He is wrong, in my opinion, in conceiving of the nation's emotional energy in terms of a fixed and limited lump. In my experience, most of those who ask why we are worrying about foreign aid when we have unemployed at home are not actually very interested in the unemployed. Indeed, they would oppose drastic governmental leadership on the unemployment problem at home as much as they oppose governmental action to prevent starvation in India. Conversely, people who are concerned about the hungry in New Delhi are at least equally concerned about poverty in New York, and those who support the war against disease in Africa also worry about the medical problems of the aging here at home. For my part, I see no evidence at all to indicate that concern for one problem weakens concern for the other—quite the contrary, in fact, for the one strengthens and confirms the other.

The real problem, then, is not to shift emotional energy from one sector to another; it is to arouse the needed emotional dynamism in the first place. It is here that the Kennedy Administration is having its problems; it is here it needs to look for solutions. In his inaugural address President Kennedy said that we should not ask what the country could do for us but what we could do for the country. So far, it seems to me, the problem has not been that the President has asked too much of us as that he has asked far too little, at home and abroad.

JAMES O'GARA

The Mood of Conservatism

RUSSELL KIRK

ACCORDING to Paul Elmer More, the great strength of conservatism lies in "its trust in the controlling power of the imagination." A paucity of imagination was the affliction of American conservatives for most of this century. But there are signs that the old vigor of conservative thought, evocative and challenging, is at work in this country once more.

For some twelve years, or a little longer, the revival of conservative ideas has stirred the muddy waters of twentieth-century intellectuality in this country. Parallel with this intellectual movement, though often unconnected with it, has gone a reawakening of popular conservatism, now clearly discernible in both political parties. And one must ask the questions, "Can some union, or at least coordination, of literary and practical conservatism be achieved? More important, can conservative principles be applied with success to the grim exigencies of this country, which may be at the crisis of its fate?"

Of ferment, there is plenty in conservative circles. But much of it is little better than squabbling. Dr. R. A. Nisbet, Dean of the University of California at Riverside, and the author of an important conservatively-inclined book, *The Quest for Community*, recently wrote to me of his distress at the tone of such debates. "It seems to me," he comments, "that conservatism has fallen somewhat from the proud estate it held during the three or four years following publication of your *The Conservative Mind*. What bothers me increasingly is the extent to which conservatives have fallen into the old *Nation* and *New Republic* habits of mere counter-punching."

Well may Professor Nisbet say so. This point is made in greater detail by a graduate student who wrote to me at length, with some eloquence: "I find myself very comfortable with your works. I am at home with Burke. But I am in no way at home with what masquerades as conservatism on our campus, or which reaches me through the courtesy of certain 'conservative' propagandists. It is all very well for us to ally ourselves temporarily with the enemy as a tactical trick for politi-

cal purposes; but I cannot clasp these 'individualists,' these atomists, to my bosom. I am not at all comfortable when they act as if limiting government were the same as detesting government; and I tremble when they tell me that when men are freed from the influence of the State, they will develop into such splendid beings.

"I THINK it monstrous that the conservative is asked to stand aside while the 'individualist' industrialist destroys everything familiar; indeed, do more than stand aside, actively defend his right to do so without the interference of the state or the community. I do not think it amazing that the populace turns to the Liberal when we offer him nothing but the consolation that the invisible hand will construct for him a materialist world beyond the dreams of avarice. I suspect that he would rather not have quite so much in the way of material goods, and have quite a bit more assurance about enjoying those he possesses. When the conservative, the man of virtue, the party of virtue, talks like a Manchester industrialist, how can we blame the people from turning to the unions and the State for help? We taught him to do so. . . .

"I see no one who approaches the rents in our social fabric as he would the wounds of a father. My friends of the Right would create discord and disharmony so great that I doubt the Republic could survive them; or at least they talk as if they would. They sound to me very high-minded, full of sacred principles which must not be compromised, no matter what the cost. End the Farm Subsidy tomorrow! The next day abolish the Unions. Harass the Communists; and if to make that omelet a few Liberal heads are broken, so much the better. Sell all government property at auction, and stop competing with businessmen. Repeal, change, destroy! More competition—it produces more goods!

"On the other hand, I see my friends of the Liberal persuasion. Innovate! Change! Destroy! For every social ill, a new law; and an administrator for every human need. Let's get the country moving again. Produce more goods!

"We have, I hope forever, managed to reject Ayn Rand and her doctrine of the Ego and his Own. But have we no more to offer than the tired doctrines of the

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nineteenth-century liberal, refurbished for 1963? Must we forever wear the livery of a plutocracy masquerading in the clothes of their betters? Perhaps you have already given me the only advice you can give—to prepare for the role of Don Quixote. If that is all we can do, then I suppose I must burnish my shield. But I do not want to sell my sword to those who today claim the Right. If I must tilt at windmills, then I may as well take on all comers.”

IN THE indignation of this student, the conservative cause has its best hope. The rising generation of conservatives, especially on the campus, are at once more passionate and more intelligent than their elders. There exist almost no John Birch devotees, for instance, in the several hundred college conservative clubs. Ayn Rand’s influence now scarcely penetrates beyond the high-school level. Even the bellicosity and sloganizing of the conservative students on his own campus, which he reproaches, is less offensive and more susceptible of amendment than the radical student movements of my own college days.

As a specimen of how student conservatives have become increasingly sober and imaginative during the past decade, one may take the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, with many college chapters, now organized in four sectional regions covering the country. The I.S.I. people began—consonant with their name—as nineteenth-century individualists, quoting Tom Paine and the old-fangled liberals. But they have altered much, so that their name somewhat embarrasses them nowadays. Edmund Burke has become their prophet; and they seek the balance of order, justice, and freedom, rather than an unqualified atomic individual liberty. Most of them have a religious basis for their politics. And as they have grown more scholarly, their popularity has increased across the country.

No longer are students simply talking about an abstraction called “conservatism,” as a kind of fad. They are thinking and reading, instead. Among the books which the I.S.I. members discuss, for instance, are Mr. Louis Bredvold’s *The Brave New World of the Enlightenment*, Mr. Peter Stanlis’ *Edmund Burke and the Natural Law*, and Mr. Wilhelm Roepke’s *A Humane Economy*. They are less impressed with tracts like Mr. Frank Meyer’s recent *In Defense of Freedom*, which is mostly John Stuart Mill *redivivus*—though forced into the Procrustean bed of ideology, as often is the way with ex-Marxist writers.

The better young people among the student conservatives, indeed, are clearer about their first principles than are their elders. Books about conservative doctrines continue to pour from both commercial and university presses; but not all of them are enlightening. Mr. Willmoore Kendall, in *The Conservative Affirmation*, has rediscovered the Federalist Papers, and makes them

the laws of the Medes and the Persians. While the Federalists had much political wisdom, one scarcely can create political theory for the dawning age solely out of these materials; yet it is heartening to find Mr. Kendall transferring his affections from Rousseau to more prudent works.

Mr. Peter Viereck almost sobs that the young conservatives have not taken him for a true prophet, but have gone pouring after Senator Goldwater. The truly conservative American politicians, he declares, are President Kennedy and Mr. Adlai Stevenson! It is not surprising that such imaginative conservatives as the graduate student I quote above, though not by any means satisfied with the leadership of the Republican party, decline to embrace a “conservatism” which takes for its heroes the leaders of the present liberal interest, and advocates latter-day “liberal” measures through “conservative” apologetics.

(Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Stevenson, like most American practical politicians, have mingled conservative and liberal concepts in their minds, of course—which I do not remark to their discredit. When, recently, President Kennedy named his favorite books, nearly all of them were about conservatives, and most of them were by conservatively-inclined authors. Parties and party leadership are in flux now. One might make a fairly good case for the argument that Senator Eugene McCarthy, in his primary assumptions, is conservative; certainly he quotes Burke.)

Yet this crabbed disagreement among conservative scholars does have the advantage of reminding the younger conservatives that conservatism is not a political sect: on the contrary, conservatism is a body of opinions, susceptible of varying interpretations, not governed by any secular Holy Writ. “What is conservatism?” Abraham Lincoln once asked. “Is it not preference for the old and tried over the new and untried?” Though it is more than this, Lincoln’s rhetorical definition does suffice to suggest that the conservative rejects ideology and utopia. (Incidentally, for the first time in its hundred and ninety-five years, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* now contains a long article on “conservatism”—by your servant.)

Rather than forming themselves into a lock-step band



of brothers, marching to Zion, the conservatives in their twenties and thirties seem to be turning toward the prudent application of conservative ideas to our present discontents. If they are rebels against the established liberalism, still they do not expect or desire to reconstitute American society on some pattern of perfection. They know that politics is the art of the possible.

So I set down here what seems to me the mood of the educated or educable conservative now groping for means to resist the power of modern totalism and to restore purpose to American life. Though there exists no conservative "party line," these beliefs are obtaining the upper hand, I think, among the young people who will be leaders in politics, business, the churches, the professions, and the colleges and schools, ten or twenty or thirty years from now.

INTEGRAL conservatism does not consist in dull contentment with present dominations and opinions. In essence, the conservative is a champion of norms, of what Mr. T. S. Eliot calls "the permanent things"; and if the time is out of joint, if norms are ignored or violated, then the conservative becomes, in some sense, a rebel. He acts, if he can, to renew the public apprehension of norms and to restore a tolerable balance of order and freedom, in whose tension justice resides. And today the thinking conservative finds himself under the domination of Dinos, King Whirl, and sees all about him the symptoms of social disintegration. In such an age the conservative turns reformer.

Far from assuming that whatever is today, is right, the American integral conservative is likely to concur in a remark of Professor Eliseo Vivas: that it is one of the marks of human decency to be ashamed of having been born into the twentieth century. Thus the younger conservatives are not dismayed by the liberals' quips about Senator Goldwater's intention of repealing the twentieth century, for who ought to sing the praises of the century of Hitler and Stalin? (Senator Goldwater, by the way, is not the unreconstructed Manchesterian or Benthamite liberal of Herblock caricature. He has learned much since he entered politics, almost in a fit of absence of mind, as a municipal reformer; and today he reads and quotes Orestes Brownson, the most neglected of American social conservatives.)

What Disraeli once gave to England, a reflective and imaginative conservatism; what Theodore Roosevelt often represented here—this, I think, is what the American conservative now fumbles for. Like it or not, we Americans have become the great bulwark against radical collectivism: we are the strong conservative power of modern times.

Yet, with an occasional exception, politicians of both parties, by a cultural lag ("Prevailing opinions," said Disraeli, "generally are the opinions of the generation that is passing."), continue to utter the phrases of lib-

eralism, old-style or new-style. Party leaders and publicists still emphasize economic measures almost exclusively, assuming that the American public desires "more spending" or "less spending"—and little else. (As Chateaubriand wrote a hundred and thirty years ago, "The modern statesman understands only the stock market—and that badly.") Many things are worse than a government somewhat plodding and unimaginative. But the sixties are a time when America cannot afford to muddle through her difficulties—a period when, in Napoleon's phrase, imagination will rule the world. However much certain journalists and professors hanker after some New Deal, the problems of the sixties are not the problems of the thirties. Primarily, the grand problems of America are not economic.

They are social problems, rather, which America shares with most of the world. They go to the root of things, and so are radical difficulties; but radical ills often may be treated by conservative remedies. They are the problems of what makes life worth living, and of what constitutes the just society. They are the problems of life with principle; of social boredom or work with purpose; of antipathy or harmony of classes; of a deadening mass-state or of ordered liberty. They are concerned with whether man is made in the image of God, or is merely a producing-and-consuming animal. Many practical politicians may be embarrassed at having to deal with such notions as these; but the survival of our nation and our civilization will depend upon our finding some tolerable answers.

A writer who calls himself neither liberal nor conservative—Professor Glen Tinder, writing in the *Review of Politics* three years ago—argues that we suffer from the ills of "mass disintegration." Of "social welfare" measures we have no lack; but mass disintegration continues apace. Some aspects of this phenomenon are the separation of man from nature, through urbanization; the loss of human roots in place; the decay of truly personal property; the common lack of links with the past and of hope for the future; the dwindling of a genuine sense of community—all these pushing us toward what Gabriel Marcel calls "a broken world." To such primary problems of modern society, now urgently demanding thought and action, neither politicians nor political scientists have paid much sober attention. Yet these, rather than "the relatively secondary problems of physical security and economic distribution," ought to be the preoccupation of the imaginative conservative and the discerning liberal. That we neglect the true ends of the nation, to our imminent peril, is evidence of what Dr. Tinder describes as "the failure of political imagination."

Now Dr. Tinder remarks elsewhere that though some conservative writers have paid attention to these matters, conservatism cannot deal adequately with such conundrums of modern society. If "conservatism" is

simply a term of relation, implying mere contentment with existing establishments, then he is right. But such energetic conservatives as the graduate student whom I have quoted set their sights higher.

THE NEW generation of conservatives is not obsessed by the slogans for or against the New Deal of Roosevelt. When legislation for "human welfare" is being discussed, for instance, the younger conservatives do not center discussion wholly round the dogmas of nineteenth-century self-reliance, nor yet give way to sentimental largesse of public funds to masses of people that happen to have political leverage. Indeed, as Dr. Tinder observes, "The rather indiscriminate fervor of liberals for welfare measures can appear highly ludicrous if one reflects on the degree of welfare which almost everyone already enjoys." The rising conservatives feel that governmental action for the general welfare should be rooted in an understanding of the effects of relieving men and women from their principal duties—and private satisfactions—in life. They recall Irving Babbitt's aphorism, "We must find our happiness in work, or not at all."

Similarly, the typical young conservative is no more an "isolationist" than he is an enthusiast for world government. He recalls, with Phyllis McGinley, that even God is said to be three separate persons: diversity, not uniformity, is the blessing of mankind, in public affairs as in private life. Therefore the conservative, though determined to withstand Soviet power, does not advocate some planned Americanization of the world. Such "liberal" secular evangelism, he feels, not only will fail of its object, but may disorder still further our time of troubles. In the long run, and perhaps the short run, the reaction of Asia and Africa—for that matter, of Europe—to our "liberal" proselytizing would be that of the Lebanese in Cunninghame-Graham's story "Sidi bu Zibbula"—sitting, like Job, upon a great dunghill: "I have seen your Western cities; and the dung is better." Foreign policy, the conservative believes, must rest upon such knowledge as this.

I cannot proceed here to detail conservative opinions on the thirty or forty principal questions before the nation nowadays. Yet I see many signs that American conservatives, responding slowly to the challenge of the age, are beginning to exercise again their old inheritance of imagination. "Conservative" political racketeers, so much exposed and denounced today (sometimes exposed and denounced by parallel "liberal" political racketeers, who make a tolerable business out of this), are a nuisance and a curse; but they have small and decreasing influence upon the conservatives whom I have tried to describe.

All in all, cheerfulness is breaking in again. American conservatives still can stand a good deal of educating. But they are ceasing to be Mill's "stupid party"; and

today, as against the "disintegrated" or "ritualistic" liberals (whom I distinguish from prudential liberals), they are less given to cant and slogan. Increasingly, they will affect the tone and temper of American politics. And theirs may be a conservatism of reflection.

For the Feast of The Nativity of John the Baptist

There came a man, one sent by God, whose name was John. Leaping out like a sudden flame from Elizabeth's barren womb, he came to kindle silence of his father's doubt to burning Benedictus. With drought of withered body tightening about the spirit grooved to rubrical demand, Zachary could not still the doubt, stand in unperturbed acceptance of the hand delineating miracles upon the fabric of his living. He had gone to offer incense in the temple on the appointed feast; he had not come for wonders that would leave a man struck dumb.

For wonders that would leave a man struck dumb, her woman heart rejoiced. She had known some of the same unbelieving joy from the quickened womb, the life that fountained in her breasts, her eyes on fire with the twin knowledge of Lover and loved. She had been dumb before the incredulous wonder and the unbelieving whispers under village roofs, hearing only the thunder of her own and overflowing storm of rain to water barrenness. And above the womb, her heart leapt, announcing love in blessed salutation to the one who filled her valley with word of God's Son.

Who filled the valley with word of God's Son but John, the bell ringer, the voice of one crying in the wilderness? There were none to explain the unprecedented name, the tongue unbound to praise the Lord, (the same Lord who had struck him dumb) when Zachary came before them at the birth. It was enough for them that John had been given. The rough garment, the early leaving and the slough of self in desert waste (the saving waste of desert!) were but the advent, graced with knowledge of the coming One who placed fullness in emptied heart. *His name is John* who cleared the way that Christ would walk upon.

DOLores WARWICK

End to Featherbedding?

THOMAS R. BROOKS

THE FIVE operating railroad unions apparently are preparing to bow before the inevitable. The report of the Presidential emergency board on the dispute over railroad work rules may make it easier for the rail unions to give way to the gradual elimination of some 65,000 rail jobs, including those of 40,000 firemen on freight and yard diesels. Certainly, the report makes any nationwide rail strike an act of desperation that is unlikely to alter the ultimate economic death sentence passed on a third of the 200,000 on-train work force.

Conceivably, the Locomotive Engineers, the Firemen & Enginemen, the Railroad Trainmen, the Railway Conductors and the Brakemen & Switchmen unions could choose to go down fighting. However, a strike—touted in advance by the report of the emergency board as “crippling” with “inestimable” damage to the nation—would be anticlimactic after four years of foot-dragging “negotiations.” No strike, today, is as damaging as New Frontiersmen like to think. But a rail strike is likely to prove fruitless for the rail unionists.

They can hardly hope to win more than the concessions already in the report to the President and secured in effect by management’s quick endorsement of its contents. Nor can the unions expect to gain much if a strike pits them against the Kennedy Administration. In the face of these considerations, the unions are preparing new positions. “This board,” says a union statement, “recognized that a need for firemen exists and that they are presently performing useful work.” A Presidential commission, appointed by President Eisenhower, “ignored those important facts. While the [present] recommendations in this regard are far from perfect, they will be studied carefully in undertaking a sincere effort to reach a negotiated settlement.”

In addition to recognizing the need for some firemen, the report places checks on management’s right to cut jobs unilaterally. The Eisenhower Commission, for example, recommended the immediate elimination of 13,000 firemen with ten years or less seniority, where the Kennedy Board recommends dropping only recently hired firemen who are figured to be “on notice” that their jobs might be temporary. There was, however, no indication how many workers would fall into this category. It could be a fairly large-size portion of the 13,000.

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But, presumably, the earlier recommendations for dismissal pay, re-hiring preference and retraining rights still hold for all displaced railroad workers. According to industry sources, this could add up to \$6,000 for a fireman with four years’ service, which compares favorably with severance payments in other industries.

The Board also hedged in management’s plan for dropping firemen on almost all freight and yard diesels as workers with ten years or more seniority are promoted, transferred, quit or retire. The unions can, if the Board’s proposals are adopted, contest the chopping of “key” jobs by appealing to arbitration. Firemen’s jobs are to be retained where an arbitrator rules their elimination would jeopardize safety or unreasonably burden other workers. What is worrisome to unionists, however, is that arbitration awards generally run against worker claims in these instances. Whether or not this would be so on the railroads only time will tell. Work force reduction in other on-train job categories are to be made only through attrition, according to Board recommendations.

In wages, the Board conceded management’s point that some workers are overpaid in relation to others and that a “thorough wage structure revision” was in order. “Reductions as well as increases,” said the report, would be “a normal and expected result.” This recommendation is in line with findings of the Eisenhower Commission but is softened by a Kennedy Board proviso that a “very long service employee” might retain his present pay rather than have it cut. The Board also recommended an average pay increase of two percent for all railroad workers following wage revisions.

THE KENNEDY Board departed from the Eisenhower Commission more in attitude than in substance. The Commission “findings” were not binding but they did tend to freeze management to a position based on its recommendations while forcing the unions into an equally hard opposition. The Kennedy Board, in contrast, allowed leeway for bargaining between the parties. The determination of how many firemen can be considered “on notice,” the question of which are “key” jobs, the revision of the wage structure and the determination of who are “very long service” employees are all matters for bargaining. Such matters could be fuel for a strike. But a strike would pit the unions not only against their employers but against a President who con-

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siders the uninterrupted operation of the nation's railroads "imperative."

But even more is at stake. Clearly, care was taken by the authors of the report—Judge Samuel Rosenman, board chairman, Professor Nathan Feinsinger, and Dr. Clark Kerr—to spell out a basic position for the Administration. Although written to bear on the railroad industry, the report can stand as a general statement of the Kennedy Administration's over-all approach to automation and so-called "featherbedding" issues in today's collective bargaining.

"Workers," declares the report, "who have spent a good portion of their working years in this industry are now faced with the prospect of losing their jobs, and, perhaps, of seeking employment in new fields for which they may not be presently adequately equipped. It is not always enough to provide them with dollars, even in generous amount, and suggest they are on their own."

Technology, reorganization and efficiency have brought on changes, the report goes on, "over which the employees have no control. The railroads, and society as a whole, have benefited by these changes; and they should both share generously in the burdens which have been cast upon the workers by dislocations. . . . Each worker substantially affected should have not only the privilege but the right to obtain the benefits of continued general education, or to seek retraining for a new job in any field in which experts find him qualified."

THE ASSUMPTION is, of course, that there will be jobs to be filled. More—that there will be for "the individual worker a continued life of usefulness to himself and his family, and to society itself." Here is where the real problems begin and where the Board—i.e., the Kennedy Administration—begins to evade the real issues posed by automation.

"Continued education" and "retraining" really postpone the question of "useful work" for the displaced. "Retraining" creates no new jobs, except for certain professionals, teachers and the like. A pitiful handful of workers so far have found jobs under various retraining and job placement programs. The meaning of "continued general education" is to say the least obscure; the reference to "experts" alarming. Is the individual displaced worker entitled to training only for such jobs as "experts" allow? Does he have no preferences to express, no choice to make on his own? Can he not even try—even fail—to aspire for something others, expert or no, may deem beyond him?

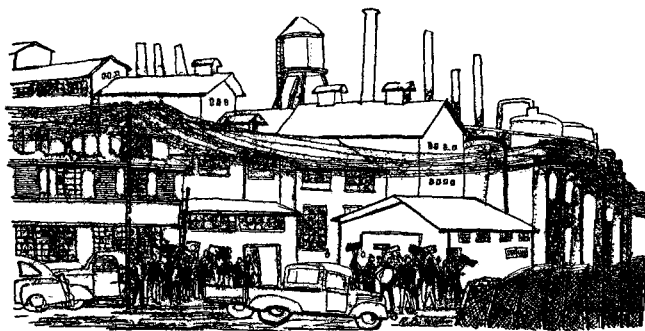
The report of the Kennedy Board raises, for the thoughtful, more questions than it sets to rest in the railroad industry dispute. To be fair, there was little or no opening for the Board to inquire into management practices—its featherbedding, inefficiencies and failures. Before a host of jobs are destroyed at a time when jobs are needed for a sizable number of our

people, is it not legitimate—and wise—to ask not only should this or that job be eliminated but to what purpose? Whose purpose? If we accept the premise that society benefits from job-cutting among blue-collar workers, should we not weed out management gardens? Since, in effect, we have been asked to wield the axe, why should we stop with the firemen? What about the men of middle management whose decisions are all made by computers? Are they any more necessary than the firemen?

Get into the debate over the obsolescence of the fireman's job—and sooner or later someone is sure to say, "You can't stand in the way of Progress." Daniel P. Loomis, president of the Association of American Railroads, talks of "firemen who tend no fires and extra brakemen who handle no brakes," while G. E. Leighty, chairman of the Railway Labor Executives Association, claims "practical, working railroaders of all crafts are united in the belief that the fireman or skilled diesel helper is essential to safe and efficient operation of trains."

Is there in fact any good reason why, to stick to the railroads, we cannot for the moment take the workers' claim at face value that the firemen's jobs are useful? There doesn't seem to be any pressing economic need for not doing so. In 1961, railroad productivity increased 7 percent as compared to only 4 percent in steel. We seem to be hauling all the freight we need to as a nation and have the capacity to haul more if the need arises. While some railroads and some rail operations are not profitable, others are. (Passenger operations, as a rule, are not profitable while freight is.)

Moreover, there is good reason to question industry figures in this area. The carriers, for example, report a return of only 2.6 percent on investment. But this figure claims profits based as a percentage of a value inflated by watered stock, past indebtedness and other shenanigans of rail management. Is there anything socially useful to be gained, for example, from the \$600 million the railroads claim can be saved by the elimination of "featherbedding"? For management, the answer is yes. As the *Wall Street Journal* recently observed, "savings accomplished by eliminating firemen could have a sharp impact on profits." Rail stock prices rose sharply at the



announcement of the report by the Presidential emergency board. The Illinois Central, which reported a profit of \$12.6 million in 1962, claims that lopping off firemen would "save" \$5.7 million which then would be carried over to the black side of the ledger. But what is there in it for the flesh-and-blood railroad worker? What is in it for the rest of us? Improved passenger service? Not likely, if the recent past has any lessons for us. Where are the guarantees of better management? Where are the guarantees that we will get the rail service the nation needs?

THE MEMBERS of the operating rail unions are known as the "aristocrats of labor" and not without reason. Their jobs are, or at least have been, desirable jobs with good pay and decent working conditions. Through their union and dieselization, firemen, for example, no longer need to shovel tons of coal into the hungry maws of the old iron monsters. Now, even if it is feasible to eliminate their jobs altogether, is it necessary or desirable? Is the workingman forever pinned to the wheel of Ixion, inexorably dipping back into the netherworld of drudgery and speedup after achieving ease and comfort?

There are experts who say that "make work" is as harmful to the individual as it is costly to employers and wasteful to society. But is this really so in every instance? The railroaders feel that they are performing useful work, not featherbedding. Where "make work" or its equivalent does exist in industry it often becomes a bargaining counter to be traded off by workers for gains in benefits, wages or other working conditions. Is this make work then harmful?

All of this is by way of raising questions so far evaded by the eggheads of the New Frontier. Do job openings come before retraining? Or, do we have the kind of retraining that enables a man to take on any kind of job that may open up? Until we have answers to these and other pertinent questions, should we try to hold on to the jobs we now have? (This, of course, is a union function.) Or, is it better to automate to the hilt, cut out *all* "obsolete" jobs and allow the displaced to collect "idle" pay, continue "general education," retrain and otherwise mark time? Who can tell what would happen if large numbers, rather than a privileged few, could loaf comfortably? Perhaps we ought to give it a try? As a people, we seem scared stiff at the thought of all our mindless machines coming to a halt. But perhaps it is time for industrialization to take a sabbatical?

In the past, capitalism tossed its workmen on the scrap heap without a blink. We are beyond that but not as far as we like to think. The report of the Presidential emergency board is an all too typical document of our time. It offers a statesmanlike solution to the rail crisis, or so it seems. But we have evaded another chance to confront reality.

THE STAGE

The Risks of Action

FOR ALL its erratic behavior and strange lapses, the Living Theatre continues to occupy a space which no other group seems willing or able to fill. It has, whatever one thinks of them, an esthetic idea, a style and a program, together with the courage to be idiosyncratic and unpopular. If its actors are inadequate to most of their tasks and its directors are given to working out their neuroses in public, the tasks are usually worthy and the neuroses interesting. If its impulse to *épater le bourgeois* is often absurdly misguided, since its audiences are mostly in its pocket beforehand, the energy released in the process manages at times to retain a rough life and value of its own. It falls on its face, but at least it has its own face. It is, in short, a living theater, with all the crudeness, embarrassing gestures, stridency, rough manners and irreducible specificity of anything that tries to be publicly alive in an age of blandness and smooth evasion.

It is hard to imagine any other company putting on Kenneth H. Brown's "The Brig." The work is so far from conventional drama, especially from conventional Broadway psychological drama, that only an institution like the Living Theatre, with its freedom from preconceptions about what a play must be—at least from preconceptions about narrative, conflict, development, denouement, etc.—would dare present it. Moreover, having risked something new, the Living Theatre has this time protected its bet; all the loose ends of its style have come together in the production and the acting company is for once fully up to the effort. The result is the best thing the group has done since "The Connection" a few years ago.

The play takes place in a Marine brig, or jail, in Japan in 1957. Barbed wire stretches between the stage and the audience and behind it, filling half the stage, is a wire cage containing five double-decker bunks for the ten prisoners. There are four guards in charge of them, and from the opening scene, when the lights go on at 4:30 to begin the day, the action details the brutality with which the guards treat the prisoners, endlessly humiliating them, beating them, forcing them to run or do push-ups until they drop. There are white lines in various places around the compound, and when a prisoner has to cross one he must shout, "Sir, prisoner number such and such requests permission to cross the white line, sir!" When the prisoners are not otherwise occupied they must stand rigidly before their bunks reading the Marine Corps manual.

They are generally addressed as "maggots" or else "worms," as part of the attempt to instill in them a radical sense of their inferiority to their jailers. "You've

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touched me!" one guard cries out to a prisoner who has brushed against him, and the tone is one of awe that such a crime could have been committed. A moment of silent contemplation of the offender is followed by the inevitable punch in the stomach.

But for all the brutality exhibited, to display it is not "The Brig's" chief point and certainly does not constitute its dramatic existence. It is a self-contained vision, a judgment and an action; its elements are less than its totality. Because the prisoners are not allowed to speak to one another, the only dialogue is among the guards and, much more importantly, between the guards and the prisoners, where it takes the form of incessant, stylized humiliation and mockery. But speech here is a set of triggers for movement. The entire two hours becomes a carefully constructed ritual, one which rises at times to a frenetic, demented intensity as the men move in their monstrous rhythms of obedience, shouting their requests to cross the white lines, dressing with frantic speed, being sent to the latrine according to a split-second abstract system, the whole thing shaping itself to a terrifying pattern of automaton-like ferocity.

And this ritual, which spreads to include the cool, deliberate, functional sadism of the guards, is the existence of the play, which is therefore very far from being a simple indictment of the Marines, though it is of course that along the way. Centrally, it is a narrow but strong and unappeasable image of our general dehumanization, our mechanization; it bodies forth the rhythms and structure of an ideal efficiency, in this case applied to persons who have broken one or another rule—we are never told what the prisoners are guilty of—and who are therefore subject to the automatic vindictiveness and terror by which the guardians of the Rule, of power, reassert its blind sovereignty. The shocking thing of course is that these are Americans, not Nazis, and so the categories by which we protect ourselves—it can't happen here—are broken down.

"The Brig," then, is more than a non-literary drama, it is an anti-literary one, and this is due to its desire to cut through language to a naked political act, which it pre-eminently succeeds in being, at the same time as it lifts political action into a metaphysical dimension. Its repetitiveness, which disturbed so many reviewers, is essential to its effect, just as the looser repetitiveness in Beckett and Ionesco is central to one of their dramatic purposes, which may be described as the cutting away of the spectator's moorings in conventional progression and narrative development. And Judith Malina's superb direction, along with the fantastic, inhuman precision of its execution, insures that "The Brig" is indeed effective.

Yet the effectiveness, I am sorry to say, is badly impaired at one point. In the single departure from the abstract formal pattern a prisoner breaks down, is beaten and is carried off screaming, "It's a madhouse,

somebody's got to listen, it's all wrong." It is indeed all wrong, but the scene injures our sense of the wrongness, precisely because it is a flagrant concession to the expected, a clichéd, belligerent editorial inserted into a tight texture of implicit meanings. If it was felt necessary to underscore the horror and the message, then a silent, unstressed collapse would have had vastly more point and force than this piece of melodrama.

"The Brig" is going to be compared with "The Connection," but I don't really think it is on a level with that play. While both are anti-explanatory, stripped of investigatory procedures and without denouement, Gelber's play has a greater resonance, the condition it examines and gives dramatic shape to is more complex, its originality is greater. Still, "The Brig" is very much worth seeing. The only trouble is that the people who need most to see it are not likely to. It is one of the sorrows of the Living Theatre that its plays which shock and unsettle are most often seen by people who have already been shocked and unsettled, who believe and are on the side of the angels. To be a minority theatre means to be most often confined to re-addressing and re-inspiring the minority.

RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

L Is For Life

ONCE AGAIN films from abroad come to the rescue and pep up the routine programs on our American screens. Not all of them are world-beaters of course, but some have enough realistic touches and interest in what's going on to provide a welcome relief from Hollywood's slickness. From England, there is "The L-Shaped Room," another item in the angry-young-man or through-a-garbage-darkly school. This new movie, excellently produced by James Woolf and Richard Attenborough, isn't screaming in protest as is "Look Back in Anger," "Saturday Night, Sunday Morning," or "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner," but it does have the compassion and warmth of "A Taste of Honey" and "A Kind of Loving" in considering characters who are muddling through their grubby surroundings.

"The L-Shaped Room" adds a new note to the grim grubbiness of its English predecessors: the bedbugs in the squalid London rooming house where Leslie Caron as a pregnant French girl seeks refuge after a loveless affair. At first it's all pretty depressing: the discouraging house, the dirt, the bugs, the haggling landlady, the nosy neighbors, the prostitutes in the basement. But then the picture changes after Leslie's visit to the abortionist, perfectly played by Emlyn Williams whose insidious attitude makes the girl determined to have

her baby. She returns to the rooming house, discovers its people aren't hopelessly mean and that they have a warmth and concern for her—even the money-minded landlady and the basement prostitutes. What follows is by no means all sweetness and light, but the story, with its mixture of sentiment, bitterness, and struggle for existence and some preservation of dignity, is engrossing to the finish.

In spite of its seamy picture of life and erring characters, "The L-Shaped Room" has its heart in the right place. Without getting preachy, and perhaps because of this, it succeeds in being quite effective in making its points in favor of marriage and against abortion and unaccepted codes of conduct. My only row with the script, written by Bryan Forbes from the novel by Lynne Reid Banks, is that at times the dialogue is too bright, too clever, too crowded with quotable lines that this group of people wouldn't be likely to come up with.

The cast, directed also by Bryan Forbes, is excellent. Leslie Caron gives a superb performance as the French girl who loves and loses and yet wins. And the good cast surrounding her add much to the picture's fascination: Tom Bell as the struggling writer who falls in love with this waif in the upstairs room and then leaves her in disgust and jealousy when he discovers she's already pregnant; Brock Peters as the Negro jazz musician who befriends the girl, then betrays her in anger, then helps her through her critical period; Pat Phoenix as the blond, blowzy prostitute; Cicely Courtneidge as an elderly vaudeville performer left only with her memories, some of which have gone rather sour; Avis Bunnage as the low-principled landlady; and others, all of whom contribute their bit to the whole stirring picture that is a tribute to man's ability to soar above the sordid.

IN ITS WAY, "Pickpocket" is also a movie about the survival of the spirit. Produced by Agnes Delahaye and expertly directed by Robert Bresson, who is known in this country for only a few pictures (mainly his 1950 "Diary of a Country Priest" and the 1956 "A Man Escapes," both certainly concerned with the spirit), this 1959 French film tells the story of a self-centered young man (played by Martin La Salle) who becomes a compulsive thief. While the script, also written by Bresson, is not as explicit in detail as it should be in dealing with such off-beat material, the visuals themselves are first-rate. They follow the rise of this young man from his first job, when he is easily caught and then let go because of lack of evidence, through his schooling in the art of his trade, through his relations with his mother, a friend who tries to get him a decent job, a girl who loves him, and then finally through his career as a successful pickpocket, a career that ends in jail.

It is amazing how Robert Bresson through his skillful camera forces us to identify with this confused young man. The black-and-white photography of the locales

in Paris and elsewhere is stunning; the cast of unknown actors is fine; and the total effect is absorbing from the suspenseful beginning to the touching finale when the jailed pickpocket realizes at last that he is in love with the girl and wonders if the strange road he has taken was leading in its way to this wakening of love. God writes straight in crooked lines.

TWO OTHER French films are so pretentious for their slight stories that they seem almost like jokes ribbing the whole New Wave school. Claude Chabrol's "The Third Lover" is about a bitter and unpleasant young writer (played disarmingly by baby-faced Jacques Charrier) who, while on an assignment in Bavaria, forces his way into the company of a successful older writer and his wife. The young man not only plans the ruin of this happy couple but finally carries his diabolic plot to the conclusion in which the jealously-aroused husband kills the wife. Perhaps this theme could have been fashioned into an interesting short, but stretched out into a full-length feature as it is by director-writer Chabrol, with more cinematic devices than it deserves, "The Third Lover" becomes just a tiresome exercise.

EVEN MORE tiresome is "The Season for Love," directed and written by Pierre Kast who uses four good French actors to tell a story of two couples who live on neighboring estates and have such little respect for marriage that they exchange sleeping partners. With a few other extra-extra-curricular marital affairs thrown in, this plot, which almost talks itself to death and makes no sense, winds up with a new shuffling of characters; one of the wives is left alone on one of the elegant estates, and the other wife takes off with the two husbands in a *ménage à trois*. If this movie weren't so handsomely photographed with gorgeous shots of the architectural structures on the two estates, the whole thing might be considered a parody. As it stands, "The Season for Love" is a bore. In or out of season, love should never be that.

THE ENGLISH have sent over their little joke too, but they aren't up to standard any more than the French. The Boulting Brothers, who made such brilliant satires as "I'm All Right, Jack," kidding labor, unions, and management, "Privates' Progress," which razzed the army, and "Man in a Cocked Hat," which laughed at Foreign Service, now take a stab at church, state and religion. Many aspects of their subject covered in "Heavens Above!" deserve the satirical once-over, but producer Roy Boulting or director John got a little timid this time, or idea-consultant Malcolm Muggeridge and scriptwriter Frank Harvey were afraid to shoot the works. The result is a long tedious affair that never quite comes off. Peter Sellers is excellent as the truly Christian minister sent to the little English town by mistake,

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and he gives another of his impeccable performances in daft burlesque. But when he pushes the doctrine of giving things away to the poor and others and the whole economy collapses, one begins to wonder if the joke also hasn't collapsed.

"Heavens Above!" talks too much and repeats its situations about the poor family that take over the vicarage too often. Isabel Jeans is lovely as the rich lady who becomes Sellers' disciple and who later drops him with a thud, but even her role becomes repetitious when stretched on endlessly. Perhaps if those good film-making Boultings had been sharper and had taken an idea or two from "Beyond the Fringe," which handles this kind of satire brilliantly, they could have made the movie they were aiming at. PHILIP T. HARTUNG

CORRESPONDENCE

"On Sharing the Mass"

Delray Beach, Fla.

TO THE EDITORS: I read with interest your reference, in the May 3 issue [Editorial: "On Sharing the Mass"], to the custom of the silent Mass in the United States, where the practice is "to will the end, namely full participation in the Mass, and not the means, namely the use of dialogue."

Between June 1961 and December 1962, I made a round-the-world liturgical pilgrimage visiting many points on all continents. I found that *all* our Catholic brethren in Germany and Austria, and *many* in Poland, Croatia, France, Belgium, and the mission lands were praying and singing all of their parts of the Mass in their national tongues. I also attended dialogue Masses, with the congregations responding and reciting in the vernacular, in Rome, Barcelona, Las Palmas, Lima,

Lugano, Naenae, Island Bay and other churches.

However, I found a strong contrast in all English-speaking countries, where the hierarchies and clergy made a few but no concerted efforts to use the dialogue Mass. Where the attempt was made, only the use of Latin was allowed; and the congregations fizzled into silence in many cases.

On several visits to the Congregation of Rites in Rome throughout the years, I was informed that there was no objection to the use of vernacular by the people in their parts of the Mass; yet it seems that only the diocese of Marquette in the United States had issued a directory for the parochial use of English dialogue in the people's part. English is used in the Mass of the Catholic Oriental Church, the Orthodox Church, the Anglican (Episcopalian) Church and in the new Western Rite of the Orthodox Church.

During World War I, I was deeply affected by the devotional German singing of prisoners of war, from which they seemed to draw much joy and happiness in the midst of their troubled lives. In the absence of German priests, they acted on their own initiative in cooperation with the British chaplains celebrating Mass for them. (Col.) JOHN K. ROSS-DUGGAN (ret.)

"Women and Rhythm"

Schenectady, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: The letter of Reverend Henry V. Sattler (April 26) is an affront to married Christians, particularly in his implications that a little prudence in family planning is un-Christian and in the false premise that this will lead to sinful practices. In cautioning avoidance of "that worldly prudence which attempts to predetermine every event in life," Father Sattler seems to advocate as an ideal that couples experience marital union as often as they wish, piously trusting God, as if He would exercise divine intervention into His established biological processes to give them only as many children as would be desirable.

In reality, as thousands of couples will testify, the decision *not* to practice rhythm is in fact a positive decision to have a baby, often ten to twelve months after a previous one. In this age of severe overpopulation it may indeed be better that a woman discover a virus than have a baby. However, the question is not Father Sattler's to raise nor ours to answer. As Bishop William Bekkers says, "This is a matter of conscience which is nobody else's business." We can only be grateful that the Church has such men as Bishop Bekkers, who recognize human dignity, freedom of thought and rights of conscience. BERNICE AND EDWARD BORN

East Lansing, Mich.

TO THE EDITORS: As an educated Catholic mother, I believe that one point in Father Sattler's letter of reply

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Write: VERY REV. DONALD GRABNER, O.S.B., Director
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to your editorial on Women and Rhythm (April 26), demands immediate protest; for he touches upon the very crux of the problem of the educated woman in the home and fails to recognize it.

Father Sattler is amazed that women are bored with children's minds and states that "teachers complain more and more that the children of well-educated people frequently have little taste for art, music, literature, and can hardly write a grammatical sentence." I am sure that the teachers of my older children would rank them in this category, and to me it is indeed a heart-breaking fact.

I am far from being bored with the minds of my children, yet the very problems inherent in bearing five children in nine years and attending to their immediate physical wants, to changing their diapers, washing and mending their clothes, nursing them through major and minor illnesses, preparing their food, etc., has brought about the neglect of other important needs. I feel this most keenly, and I think that Father Sattler should be made aware of the naïveté of his attitude. Like G. K. Chesterton, whose much-quoted dictum on motherhood all will recall, Father Sattler must have been raised in a world of nannies, cooks, and parlor maids.

I have no desire to leave my home, nor do I imagine that any contribution that I could make outside of it could possibly equal the task to be accomplished here, if done effectively. However, it would seem that a person holding the position Father Sattler does should not be so insensitive to the difficulties faced by mothers who, because of the very size of their families, are severely limited in the contribution which they can make to the intellectual and spiritual life of their children.

(Mrs.) SARAH S. BONNEN

"Life and Holiness"

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: May I offer a brief comment on Philip Deasy's review of Thomas Merton's *Life and Holiness* in The Commonweal, April 19, 1963. Professor Deasy's criticism has little bearing on the book itself, which was not written for scholars and academics, or for professors seeking a sophisticated spirituality.

The book is described on the jacket as follows: "With a simplicity of language and an intellectual candor that exemplify the purity of his vision, Thomas Merton here traces the basic principles of the spiritual life." The first sentence of the author's Introduction reads, "This is intended to be a very simple book, an elementary treatment of a few basic ideas in Christian spirituality."

To criticize *Life and Holiness* because it is basic, because it is simple, because it is elementary, is like criticizing the Gospels because they are not sufficiently esoteric.

EDWARD J. FOYE

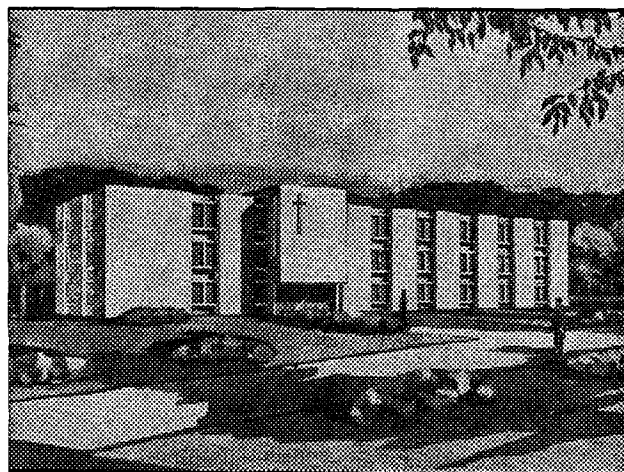
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Shedding Some Economic Myths and Delusions

The Paper Economy. By David T. Bazelon. Random House. \$6.95.

The Great Ascent. By Robert L. Heilbroner. Harper & Row. \$4.

by Edward T. Chase

HERE IS a feast, two of our very best writers on economics (I do not say economists, a hopelessly inaccessible clan) interpreting the headlong course of our own and the underdeveloped world's socio-economic development. The effect is sobering. Yes, they say, we can probably stay the course with Communism. We can win, even (though that is too misleading a word for such a complex situation) in the sense that the world's overall political structure may eventually settle into a preponderantly democratic rather than totalitarian character. But this can be so only given certain difficult conditions. And the main point on which both authors agree emphatically is that mindless adherence to the price-market system, that anachronistic ideology of the American businessman, can finish us.

Mr. Bazelon's mission is to disclose how modern technology has obliterated the conditions (principally scarcity) of a *laissez-faire* market economy, if indeed there ever was such a thing. While Bazelon focuses on the United States, Mr. Heilbroner is chiefly concerned with the emerging nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Not only is the market system unexportable, writes Heilbroner, since it cannot conceivably function in these rudimentary economies; unless we boldly modify our own domestic brand so as to raise the qualitative level of essential public services by greater resort to government action "we must be prepared to bear the consequences of inaction, which is to say, the probable slow loss of prestige and leadership to the Communist world." The recent controversy over the Latin American aid program report of J. Peter Grace's businessmen's committee, which urges that the U.S. rely on private investment in its Alliance for Progress,

points up the timeliness of Heilbroner's study.

An exhilarating experience in reading these two books is to see how far behind we have left the dated rhetoric about socialism vs. capitalism. These writers are relatively young men (Bazelon born in 1923, Heilbroner in 1919) alive to the complexities of modern mixed economies and bored with the irrelevant obsessions of doctrinaires on the right or on the left.

If there is a radical cast to their thought it is in the clear-eyed courage with which they are willing to jettison our most comforting delusions and to identify real potential disasters. To wit: Heilbroner succinctly but irrefutably demonstrates that only socialistically oriented and forbiddingly authoritarian governments will be able to bring off "the great ascent" of these impoverished lands to passable levels of economic development.

Americans may not like this but they must lump it. They must also see to it not only that foreign aid continues but that it is distributed through international agencies. They must also see to it that racial equality be achieved here, sooner rather than later. The final essential is that domestic reforms of all kinds, such as better housing, transportation, education, medical care, etc., be speeded up through vigorous governmental leadership and increased support. Heilbroner conveys all this in an enviably effective style, at once elegant but unpretentious as well as crisp.

Mr. Bazelon's is a long, ambitious essay, profoundly original despite its manifest kinship with the works of Veblen, Thorndon Arnold, Adolf Berle, Gardiner Means and Galbraith, the latter being his only rival in wit, verve and irreverence among contemporary writers of economics. Bazelon develops an extraordinarily penetrating account of how the modern price-market mechanism actually functions—the crucial role of the federal government as "the big under-

writer;" the realities of administered pricing; the deficiencies of the profit motive as a resource allocator; the changed nature of property rights; the significance of the rising new managerial elite; the stifling effect on modern technology of private corporations' total absorption with balance sheet profits rather than with production.

Bazelon's "paper economy" is his figure of speech for the infinitely complex procedures, laws and myths which perpetuate the price-market system and the notions of property rights it is founded upon. His analysis is subtle, funny, and difficult, quite impossible to explain in a short review. What is crucial about it is his conclusion: that the end effect of this ingenious accounting exercise has been for a long time now inhibitory, not expansionist, and that the U.S. cannot overcome her sluggish growth rate, unemployment and absurd imbalance between private affluence and public squalor until she creates an economic structure keyed to the fullest exploitation of modern technology. Again and again Bazelon invokes the example of the U.S. industrial production miracle of World War II, when this country really competed for *production*. He makes it clear that the *rentier* psychology—that of all those economic groups such as banks, real estate agencies, insurance companies, etc., who benefit not from economic growth but predominantly from actual declines in prices—is pervasive in our economic practices and thinking and that it is the opposite of what the times demand. It is in fact self-defeating for the business world itself. Bazelon, like Heilbroner, is aghast at the prospect of the Neanderthal economic ideologues of business prevailing, for they can rob us of the potential fruits of modern technology. If a more rational form of mixed economy is not soon developed, Bazelon is fearful that we will increasingly slip behind in the contest with Communism. In that event, an industrial-military elite might try to

rectify matters by bringing this "peaceful" competition to a decision by nuclear war.

Heilbroner is the best expounder of economic thinking today, and what he may lack in originality he more than compensates for in thor-

oughness, insight, and mature judgment. Bazelon is always creative, even when he reformulates the ideas of Veblen and of Berle. Together, these books should help greatly to sharpen the issues in the gathering debate over economic policy.

Convulsions in the Body Politic

On Revolution. By Hannah Arendt. Viking Press. \$6.50.

by Edward T. Gargan

THERE ARE only two indispensable books on the related significance of the French and American revolutions. One is *The Age of the Democratic Revolution* by Robert R. Palmer of Princeton. The other is Hannah Arendt's new study *On Revolution*. It is the thesis of Professor Palmer that in the period 1760 to 1800 there occurred throughout the Atlantic civilization a "crisis of community" provoked by a loss of confidence in the justice and reasonableness of existing authority. This authority was rejected by the revolutionary generation as not really "representing" the governed in Britain, Ireland, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, and other parts of the West. The American Revolution reflected one classical response to the critical breakdown of the old order and the French Revolution the other permanent response. Since these revolutions historians have endlessly debated whether or not the American struggle was truly a revolutionary one. Professor Palmer is in no doubt that the American War of Independence was in every sense a major revolutionary event in the history of mankind. Hannah Arendt is of the same opinion.

She differs from Professor Palmer, however, in her views concerning the ultimate meaning of the two great revolutions. Palmer is on the whole sympathetic to the French Revolution and to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen enacted by the French National Assembly on August 26, 1789. Miss Arendt considers the French Revolution to have been doomed from the outset. She regards the document which most men have held to be both great and price-

less as a tragic muddle, disastrous in philosophy and consequences.

Alexis de Tocqueville, whom Hannah Arendt understands more perceptively than any of the thousands who have consulted his pages, was also of the view that the American Revolution was not a true one. It lacked, he believed, the proportions, the depth, the intensity of the French Revolution. More than once he argued that geography had accomplished the American separation and independence. "Who would dare," he wrote, "to compare the American war to the wars of the French Revolution, or the efforts of the Americans to ours? . . ." Tocqueville spent his life trying to understand why the French Revolution began in a quest for liberty and ended by leading France to a new society of constraint. Hannah Arendt has taken up Tocqueville's inquiry.

Like Tocqueville she has been a witness to the critical events of her century. The major events in Tocqueville's life were his voyage to Jacksonian America, his experience of the collapse of the Second French Republic, and of the emergence of the despotism of Louis Napoleon. Hannah Arendt has experienced the failure of the Weimar Republic, the rise of Hitler, the introduction into history of a new form of polity, that of the totalitarian state. The events that Hannah Arendt witnessed were graver and more destructive than those endured by Tocqueville. Our century's violence, murder and terror renders the mid-nineteenth century a pleasant epoch in the history of mankind. Yet the infinitely harsher historical experience of Miss Arendt does not in itself explain the difference in her response to the problem of revolution.

Tocqueville, presented with a world emerging towards a demo-

cratic order, felt obliged to create "a new science of politics," adequate to the analysis of "a whole new world." Gifted with a philosophical faculty not granted to him, Hannah Arendt has approached the problem of political analysis as a philosopher committed to the most ancient understanding of that calling, one that considers our apprehension of being, our capacity to speak of its reality, decisive for our understanding as controlling the human institutions we create. She has never written a page that does not return to the origins of Western intellectual life, to the Greek world view. In this sense all the critics who speak of her work as being "original" are correct. It is evident that she regards Western thought of the last twenty-five hundred years as one compact and virtually present reality.

It is from this philosophical position that she writes in *On Revolution*, about Jefferson's confusion, in the Declaration of Independence, between "consent" and "mutual pledges." "This lack of conceptual clarity and precision with respect to existing realities and experiences has been the curse of Western history ever since, in the aftermath of the Periclean Age, the men of action and the men of thought parted company and thinking began to emancipate itself altogether from political factuality and experience." Can one accept such arguments? Some years ago Toynbee proposed that the inability of the Greek world to solve the problems of international life in turn determined the failure of Rome. His reviewer in *The Times Literary Supplement* severely condemned any historical explanation that would interpret the life of one generation by the misconduct of a generation separated from them by centuries. One is tempted to direct the same criticism to Miss Arendt's arguments. This temptation soon fades, however, because her analysis rests upon more than the historian's command of political reality.

Her views of the French Revolution, the American Revolution, and the prospects of the West are dependent upon her philosophy of man and the state. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* this philosophy was

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subordinated to her description of the relationship of anti-Semitism and imperialism to the creation of modern totalitarianism. At key moments, however, in *The Origins*, the non-order of totalitarianism is defined by reference to the only political order that has honored mankind. This is the creation of a body politic that provides the space that permits men to act and by acting to actualize their freedom. Every political effort that has failed in Western history, she attributes to man's incapacity to preserve this specific concrete kind of political order. In her *The Human Condition* she has traced out the metaphysical confusion on the nature of man characteristic of modernity. And in her recent volume *Between Past and Future* (1961) she has outlined the philosophical failure and loss of memory exhibited in most modern conceptions of history, tradition, freedom and authority. This labor has amounted to the construction of a specific philosophy, a metaphysics.

Until this philosophy has been examined in something like the scope of the studies on Martin Heidegger, judgments on the value of her study of Revolution will remain premature. Miss Arendt does not fail to use ordinary historical evidence to depict the events of 1776 and 1789. But the historian who begins to take issue with her conclusions is soon forced to halt. For example, her views on the utter impracticality and philosophi-

cal absurdity of the French Revolution are challenged by the work of the greatest historian of the French Revolution in the twentieth century, Georges Lefebvre. His essay in the *Annales* of 1948, on "*La Révolution française dans l'histoire du monde*," contradicts her entire thesis that only the American Revolution, by avoiding the larger questions of democracy, equality, and fraternity was able to create political institutions giving life to a constituted body politic that protected and preserved the public freedom of its citizens.

Yet the historian cannot adequately take issue with Miss Arendt until such time as he has affirmed or denied the validity of her philosophy. This judgment is now imperative. In *On Revolution* Miss Arendt deliberately indicts as sentimental fools all who believe that concepts such as democracy, the rights of man, and the pursuit of happiness can create, guide, or protect a free society. Albert Camus concluded his traumatic *L'Homme révolté* with the advice "If our History is our Hell, still we cannot avert our faces." Hannah Arendt has not averted her gaze, but the scrutiny she demands of us requires that we become philosophers before we can become free. If we are to escape the original sin of our fathers in the Western world, we must begin to philosophize, to understand the origins of our political existence, the path of our political fortune and misfortune.

Breviary of a Political Heretic

The Prison Meditations of Father Delp. Herder and Herder. \$4.50.

by Walter Arnold, Jr.

"SPIRITUALLY we seem to be in an enormous vacuum." With such words does this book mark the end of traditional "spiritual writing." The reader is immediately aware of being a witness to the beginning of a radically new spirituality in this extraordinary work. It could be called, with fitting scandal, a "worldly spirituality."

Father Alfred Delp, S.J., composed his "meditations" in a prison cell, while awaiting trial for treason

against the Nazi state. He had been arrested in 1944 as a member of the "Kreisau Circle," an anti-Nazi group, which was planning the restoration of a Christian social order in Germany after the war. Along with others, he was summarily tried and executed as a "political heretic" in February of 1945. These "meditations" were thus written *in extremis*, as a testament to his continued trust in God, in men, and in Germany's destiny.

Actually, the present book is made up of diverse writings. There are extracts from Father Delp's diary, of which the theme is really the tragedy

of modern history and the failure of the Churches. Then there are meditations proper, on aspects of the liturgical season of his confinement, from Advent to Epiphany. The theme of these is, "Rejoice, the Lord is near." (And this seems the place to remark that the translation from the German appears to be extremely felicitous.)

Beside these, the reader will find a profound meditation on the Our Father which is like hearing the Lord's Prayer for the first time. And in a beautiful meditation on "Come, Holy Ghost," among so many truths, there is this startling definition: "The Holy Ghost is God's passion for Himself."

Some of the most interesting sections of the book, however, are those gathered under the heading "The Tasks Before Us." Here, Father Delp discusses the education and the future of man, and the fate of the Churches. His diagnosis of modern man's sickness, his despair and presumption, is as acute as his indictment of the "political Churches" of Europe is unsparing. He speaks of

the new generation as "being separated from the clear conclusions of our traditional theology by a great mass of boredom and disillusion thrown up by past experience." The observation fits believers as well as unbelievers.

Speaking only for the Catholic Church, his hope for the future rests upon her acknowledging her failure and her determination to meet the needs of the robbed and beaten stranger as a brother. He speaks too of a "God-conscious humanism," of which the Church, liberated from her past historical "privileges" would be the energizer. Father Delp's plea is simple enough: it is for complete intellectual and spiritual renewal within the Church.

What is most characteristic of these writings, however, is their absolute honesty and the absolute sincerity of their passion for man. The reader would have to go to St. Augustine—or to Nietzsche—to find their equal in this regard. They form indeed a very testament to freedom, written as they were literally in chains. The reader must think of Titian's famous painting of "Christ Crowned with Thorns," in which the Lord is bound as he submits, a free man, to the humiliation of his torturers. Just so is Father Delp in these *Meditations* a perfect witness to liberty.

Nor is it to be forgotten that the author of these writings was a German and that he wished to die for Germany. Goethe, Boehme, Eckhart, occupy his thoughts, and it is clear that he sees his travail as in part symbolic of that of the Fatherland. "If in the midst of this frightfulness we can learn to pray," he says, "then this hell will bring forth a new man." It did. The pledge that it will bring forth more is here in some of the most powerful spiritual writings of recent times.

REVIEWERS

Edward T. Chase writes frequently on cultural and social questions for this and other magazines.

Edward T. Gargan is a member of the history department at Loyola University, Chicago.

Walter Arnold, Jr. is a graduate of the Harvard philosophy department and assistant editor of *The Commonweal*.

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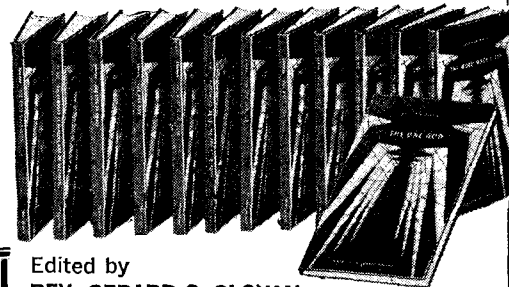
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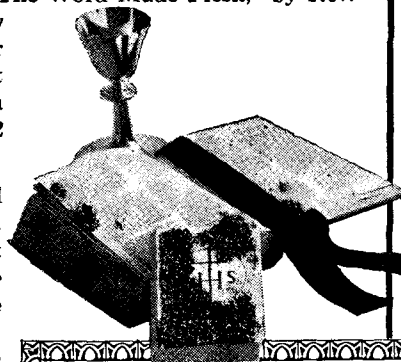
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